

reason. We are here with another battling with the President of the United States. He would like us to spend more money, and he would like us not to cut taxes for the American people. It is unbelievable.

As we are working here tonight, the President is threatening to veto very reasonable, even targeted tax relief that helps people save more for retirement, helps people obtain health care, helps people be able to improve our schools and construct more schools around this country.

He has even threatened to veto tonight the repeal of the Federal excise tax on telephones. This is the 1898 temporary luxury tax put in place on telephones that lives on today. This tax hits particularly people that have fixed incomes very hard.

Think about it, everyone in America needs a telephone. It is very important to those of us who are worried about our economy and worried about what is going to keep our economy going that telecommunications not be taxed. Yet the President believes this tax, this 3 percent tax that is on every one of our phone bills that goes into general revenues that was put in place in 1898 as a temporary luxury tax ought to continue in existence.

We have a surplus all created by the American people. Let us hope this President begins to give a little meaningful, serious, reasonable tax relief.

LET CONGRESS STAND UP FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS AT LOCAL LEVEL

(Mr. HOEKSTRA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, we are in Washington today talking about some very important issues. Over the last 3 years, my subcommittee has had the opportunity to travel around the country and take a look at education to see what is working in America and what is not working in America.

It is exciting to go down to the State and local level and see what parents, teachers, and local administrators are doing to bring about excellence in education. We need to reinforce those efforts and let people at the local level continue to innovate and move forward.

We contrast that with what is going on here in Washington. We have a Department of Education that has failed its audit for the last 2 years, has numerous cases of waste, fraud, and abuse. And now the President wants to put additional programs under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education so that there are more Washington programs and bureaucrats telling our local parents and administrators what to do in education.

This is a discussion and a debate about who controls our local schools.

Let us stand up for parents and teachers at the local level.

WHY CONGRESS IS IN SESSION ON SUNDAY NIGHT

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, we are here on a Sunday night. I want to tell my colleagues, I am kind of sad. I would rather be with my family. But I will tell you one thing, it is my duty to be here and fight for the things that I believe in.

One of the things that I am fighting for is little old Brantley County, Georgia. Because, see, the President has a scheme to federalize school construction. He wants to have school construction run out of Washington, D.C., for every county school board in the United States of America. We want local control.

I want to tell the folks back in Brantley County, Georgia, that you are going to continue to be in charge. We are here to fight for classroom size. I am with the President on that. We need to reduce the size of the classroom. But I am away from the President on Medicare reimbursement. He has threatened to veto a bill that has been endorsed by the American Hospital Association. I am here because the President has threatened to veto a bill that would take away 100 percent health care deductibility, which would make health care affordable for small businesses and farmers. That is worth fighting for. And I am here for the Social Security lockbox, which the President has yet to commit himself to.

That is why we are here on a Sunday night, and I am not going to leave until we get this thing done.

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LET US SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT

(Mr. SHERMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, we have heard discussion of the school construction provisions of the tax bill. Let me set the record straight. We Democrats want provisions where school boards are given a chance to issue bonds, where the Federal Government pays the interest costs and the bond money is used immediately to build schools. Unfortunately, this tax bill, while it provides some of those bonds, provides not enough and then provides over a \$2 billion cost to the Federal Government to liberalize the arbitrage rules in which school boards will be told by the Federal Government to delay building schools, take the

money, put it on Wall Street and try to make money by arbitrage provisions. That is how Orange County, California, went bankrupt. That is not a way to help our local schools. The way to help our local schools is to reject the tax bill that passed through this House and instead provide a full \$25 billion worth of bonds where the Federal Government will pick up the interest cost. We need to build schools on Elm Street, not skyscrapers on Wall Street.

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, how much is enough? Three and a half weeks ago we were supposed to have been adjourned, but we are here because of the politics down at the White House, the politics of putting partisanship ahead of people.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder how many of our colleagues ever saw the movie "The Jerk." It is a rags to riches to rags story wherein the main character is evicted, and he is kind of hanging on to the last bits of furniture and items in his home as he is walking out the door, as he says, I don't need anything else. I have everything I need except for this lamp.

We are seeing that go on over at the White House today: We do not need anything else except for amnesty for illegal aliens. We do not need anything else, I got everything I need except needles for heroin addict. I do not need anything else except for more Government employees, and that is all I need, except for this, I need more Government construction. That is what we are seeing going on at the White House, The Jerk. It is a great movie. Everyone ought to see. How much is enough, Mr. Speaker?

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THANKS FOR THE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. HILL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HILL of Montana. Mr. Speaker, tonight is a difficult moment for me because this probably will be my last opportunity to address this House because when this session ends my service in this institution will end. I would just like to take a moment, if I could,